

□ Lt. Governor Garamendi Issues Statement to Commemorate the United Services Organization's 67th Anniversary

Sacramento, CA- Lt. Governor John Garamendi issued the following statement in commemoration of the United Services Organization's 67 years of service:

“In this time of war, it is well to remember and celebrate the anniversary of the United Services Organization, better known to all of us as the “USO.” For the men and women of our Armed Forces who have served us since its founding at the beginning of the Second World War, the USO means everything from coffee and donuts to big name entertainers. Most of all, it means a place of refuge away from home or a few precious moments of laughter and joy in the midst of combat. Born from a collaborative effort of the Salvation Army, the YMCA, the YWCA, the National Jewish Welfare Board, and the National Catholic Community Service, the USO to this day provides recreational leave for members of the U.S. Armed Forces and their families.

“During World War II, the USO boasted nearly a million volunteers and operated more than 3,000 recreational clubs. Set up quickly in churches, museums, barns, railroad cars, storefronts, and other unlikely locales, USO clubs were places for both lively social activities and quiet contemplation. Some came to dance and watch movies, others to write letters and find religious counsel.

“Bob Hope is the entertainer most often recognized as a stalwart of the USO. From the Second World War, even unto Operation Desert Storm, his indefatigable USO Show troupers brought a slice of home to the front lines. Through the years, the USO has stayed with the times, bringing talent like the Doobie Brothers and Cheap Trick in the ‘80’s, to the talent of today like Aerosmith, Bruce Willis, Drowning Pool, and many others.

“As the USO celebrates more than 67 years of service, the world is witnessing history-making events at a record pace, events that have influenced the very nature and mission of America’s military. One thing is certain, the USO will adapt and change to meet the challenges, as it has since its founding and will continue to fulfill its mission to service members and their families until every one comes home.

“I join the citizens of California in saying “well done” to the USO. May it, and the men and women who make it live, continue to provide our troops with the comfort and joy that has been its hallmark since its birth so long ago.”

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